



Fact Sheets and Information Papers

Hospitals for a Health Environment (H2E)

January 2005

BACKGROUND: Hospitals for a Healthy Environment (H2E) is a joint project of the American Hospital Association, the Environmental Protection Agency, Health Care Without Harm, and the American Nurses Association. The primary goal of H2E is to educate health care professionals about pollution prevention opportunities in hospitals and health care systems. Through activities such as the development of best practices, model plans for total waste management, resource directories, and case studies, the project hopes to provide hospitals and health care systems with enhanced tools for minimizing the volumes of waste generated and the use of toxic chemicals.

To achieve the program's goals, the American Hospital Association (AHA) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) signed a landmark agreement to advance pollution prevention efforts in our nation's health care facilities. The Memorandum of Understanding, which is the cornerstone of the H2E initiative, calls for:

- Virtually eliminating mercury-containing waste from health care facilities' waste streams by 2005
- Reducing the overall volume of waste (both regulated and non-regulated waste) by 33 percent by 2005 and by 50 percent by 2010
- Identifying hazardous substances for pollution prevention and waste reduction opportunities, including hazardous chemicals and persistent, bioaccumulative, and toxic pollutants

PARTNERS FOR CHANGE PROGRAM:

The H2E project invites all healthcare facilities to join the H2E Partners for Change Program. Partners pledge to adopt the goals of the H2E Program and to make changes in their facilities that protect their community's health and the environment. To help healthcare facilities meet these goals, H2E will help them get started by providing the necessary tools to establish a program, do the work, and report their achievements. H2E also provides a number of tools and resources on mercury reduction, chemical reduction, pollution prevention, solid waste reduction, and green purchasing to help facilities implement the goals. H2E will recognize partner accomplishments by hosting award ceremonies in conjunction with AHA, EPA, Healthcare Without Harm, and the American Nurses Association.

For more information on the H2E Program, you can go to <http://www.h2e-online.org/index.cfm>

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